IN THE CLAIMS:

Amended claims follow:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for limiting processor utilization by a virus scanner operable to scan data for viruses, the method comprising:

defining a processor utilization ~~level~~value;

running the virus scanner;

temporarily suspending running of the virus scanner such that usage of the processor is generally limited to said processor utilization value;

wherein defining a processor utilization value comprises defining a maximum value and temporarily suspending running of the virus scanner limits said processor utilization value to said maximum value;

wherein a control thread is executed over a sampling period;

wherein suspending the running of the virus scanner comprises suspending the virus scanner for a suspend time period equal to the sampling period multiplied by one minus the maximum value.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein running the virus scanner comprises executing a scanner thread.

3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2 wherein suspending the virus scanner comprises executing ~~a~~the control thread operable to suspend execution of the scanner thread.

4. – 11. (Cancelled)

12. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the virus scanner is an on-demand scanner.

13. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein defining a processor utilization ~~level~~value comprises displaying a dialog box on a screen of a computer to allow a user to select the utilization ~~level~~value.

14. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein defining a processor utilization ~~level~~value comprises defining a default value.

15. (Currently Amended) A system for limiting processor utilization by a virus scanner comprising:

a virus scanner operable to scan data for viruses;

a processor operable to execute a scanner thread to scan the data; and

a controller configured to temporarily suspend execution of the scanner thread to limit processor utilization by the virus scanner;

wherein a processor utilization value is defined by defining a maximum value and temporarily suspending running of the virus scanner limits said processor utilization value to said maximum value;

wherein a control thread is executed over a sampling period;

wherein suspending the execution of the virus scanner comprises suspending the virus scanner for a suspend time period equal to the sampling period multiplied by one minus the maximum value.

16. (Currently Amended) The system of claim 15 further comprising a graphical user interface configured to allow a user to enter a preferred processor utilization ~~level~~value.

17. – 18. (Cancelled)

19. (Original) The system of claim 15 wherein the virus scanner is an on-demand scanner.

20. (Original) The system of claim 15 wherein the controller is a control thread operable to instruct an operating system to suspend execution of the scanner thread.

21. (Currently Amended) A computer program product embodied on a computer readable medium for limiting processor utilization by a virus scanner, comprising:

computer code that defines a processor utilization ~~level~~value;

computer code that runs the virus scanner;

computer code that temporarily suspends running of the virus scanner so that usage of ~~the~~a processor is generally limited to the processor utilization value; and

a computer readable medium that stores said computer codes;

wherein said processor utilization value is defined by defining a maximum value and temporarily suspending running of the virus scanner limits said processor utilization value to said maximum value;

wherein a control thread is executed over a sampling period;

wherein suspending the execution of the virus scanner comprises suspending the virus scanner for a suspend time period equal to the sampling period multiplied by one minus the maximum value.

22. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 21 wherein the computer readable medium is selected from the group consisting of CD-ROM, floppy disk, tape, flash memory, system memory, and hard drive~~, and a data signal embodied in a carrier wave~~.

23. (Currently Amended) The computer program product of claim 21 further comprising code that displays a graphical display to a user requesting the user to define the processor utilization ~~level~~value.

24. (New) The method of claim 13 wherein the dialog box on the screen includes a slider bar.

25. (New) The method of claim 13 wherein the dialog box on the screen includes a plurality of check boxes.

26. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein the processor utilization value includes 33%.

27. (New) The system of claim 16 wherein the graphical user interface includes a slider bar.

28. (New) The system of claim 16 wherein the graphical user interface includes a plurality of check boxes.

29. (New) The system of claim 15 wherein the processor utilization value includes 33%.

30. (New) The computer program product of claim 23 wherein the graphical display includes a slider bar.

31. (New) The computer program product of claim 23 wherein the graphical display includes a plurality of check boxes.

32. (New) The computer program product of claim 21 wherein the processor utilization value includes 33%.